

Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6622

S E C R E T JIDDA 1708

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EFIN, ENRG, SA, US

SUBJECT: US-SAUDI COOPERATION: PRESS ANNOUNCEMENT

REF: (A) JIDDA 1679; (B) STATE 65694

1. CHARGE CALLED ON ROYAL COUNSELOR PHARAON IN RIYADH
1000 LOCAL (0700 GMT) APRIL 3, AND REVIEWED WITH HIM
DEPT'S LATEST VIEWS ON JOINT US-SAUDI COMMUNIQUE (REF B).

2. PHARAON TOOK EXCEPTION TO REFERENCE TO "COMMON SECURITY
INTEREST" IN PARA ONE OF COMMUNIQUE. HE AFFIRMED THAT IT
WOULD OF COURSE BE UNDERSTOOD THAT IN SUCH A COOPERATIVE FRAMEWORK,
US-SAG SECURITY COORDINATION SHOULD BE EXTREMELY CLOSE AND EXTEND
TO TRAINING, INFORMATION EXCHANGE, AND ESPIONAGE (SIC). BUT HE
WAS CERTAIN THAT A PUBLIC REFERENCE TO SUCH COOPERATION WOULD
STIMULATE RADICAL ACCUSATIONS US AND SAG HAD SIGNED SECRET
SECURITY PACT AIMED AGAINST THEM. PHARAON CERTAIN KING WOULD
FEEL SAME AS HE DID.

3. PHARAON THEN ASKED WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ARABIC STATEMENT
ON OUR FUTURE DEFENSE RELATIONSHIP? SAG'S LANGUAGE, HE SAID,
HAD BEEN CAREFULLY STUDIED, AND HE FELT THAT CHOICE OF WORDS
(ESPECIALLY "TAZWIID" FOR "TO FURNISH"-- PARA 2 REF (A) HAD JUST
RIGHT MEASURE OF BREADTH AND VAGUENESS FOR SAG'S PURPOSE.
CHARGE SAID PHRASE TENDED TO SOUND A LITTLE OPEN HANDED WHEN
RENDERED LITERALLY INTO ENGLISH.

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4. IN SEARCH FOR COMMON DENOMINATOR, CHARGE THEN

SUGGESTED THAT FIRST PARA OF COMMUNIQUE SIMPLY READ QUOTE FOLLOWING DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICAN, THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE PREPARED TO EXPAND AND GIVE MORE CONCRETE EXPRESSION TO COOPERATION IN THE FIELDS OF ECONOMICS, TECHNOLOGY, INDUSTRY AND DEFENSE MATTERS (SHU"UUN AL DIFAA')."

5. DR. RASHAD ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPLE ON BEHALF OF SAG; SAID HE WOULD LET CHARGE KNOW ASAP OF KING'S SPECIFIC APPROVAL TO SUCH LANGUAGE.

6. AT 1215 LOCAL, HOWEVER, DR. PHARAON INFORMED CHARGE HE HAD SPOKEN WITH KING AND THAT KING WANTED LANGUAGE RE DEFENSE COOPERATION TO REMAIN AS IT HAD BEEN IN SAUDI VERSION. (PHARAON RE-READ IT OVER TELEPHONE.) PHARAON THEN RESTATED SPECIFICALLY KING HAD REJECTED VERSION PROPOSED (PARA 4 ABOVE) AND THAT THIS WAS KING'S LAST WORD. CHARGE SAID HE WOULD REPORT TO WASHINGTON AND LET FONMINISTRY AND DIWAN KNOW OF OUR REACTIONS.

7. PHARAON SAID SAG AGREEABLE TO APRIL 5 DATE AND TIME FOR ANNOUNCEMENT. AS TO CONSULTATIONS, HE SAID THIS WOULD BE DISCUSSED WITHIN SAG, BUT HAD NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION.

8. WHILE COMING UP ON PLANE MORNING APRIL 3, CHARGE HAD BRIEF TALK WITH MINSTATE OMAR SAQQAF ABOUT DEPT'S PROPOSED ANNOUNCEMENT. SAQQAF'S REACTION TO PHRASE "COMMON SECURITY INTEREST" WAS SAME AS PHARAON'S.

9. COMMENT: DO NOT BELIEVE THAT KING, HAVING TWICE CONFIRMED LANGUAGE OF COMMUNIQUE REGARDING DEFENSE STATEMENT WILL BE SUSCEPTIBLE TO FURTHER APPROACHES; PHARAON MADE CLEAR THAT KING HAD SPOKEN LAST WORD ON SAG'S POSITION. IT CLEAR ALSO HOWEVER THAT SAG MORE CONCERNED WITH ARABIC VERSION THAT HAS KING'S IMPRIMATUR, THAN WITH ENGLISH ONE. IF WE CAN ACCEPT ARABIC STATEMENT (REF (A) SAG WOULD NOT CAVIL AT A LESS THAN LITERAL TRANSLATION ALONG LINES SUGGESTED PARA 8 (SAME REF). PLEASE ADVISE.

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